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**MORRISTOWN/MORRISVILLE
PLANNING COMMISSION
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Minutes of June 3, 2008

Members Present: John Meyer, Andrew Volansky, Bill Henchey, Lauren Traister, Max Paine, Steve Berson, Kelly Rogers

Staff: Mark Leonard, Morristown ZA

Also Attending: see attached list

Chairman Bill Henchey called meeting to order at 7:00 pm

Select Board member Dave Yacavone spoke about the idea of establishing a new industrial/business park within the currently defined Business Office Park (BOP) zoning district. He has spoken with the Village of Morrisville trustees and several of the BOP property owners to gauge interest in and support for a public/private partnership to develop the infrastructure needed to attract businesses to this area. He has also spoken with LEDC director Art Sanborn to see how this might be handled. Dave said Morrisville & Morristown have to find some way to be unique, to be a destination for new businesses that can bring jobs and property tax relief to residents.

Bill H agreed a public/private venture might be the best way to bring roads, utilities, and other necessary infrastructure to this area. He noted that such a task would most likely be beyond the financial means of any of the interested parties, but could well happen if all the players worked together. He asked if the current BOP zoning uses and restrictions were preventing the type of development Dave was proposing. Dave said as far as he knew, they were not. Bill asked what kind of timeframe Dave envisioned for this effort; Dave said it was likely a 2-3 year project.

Max P said a site walk of the area involved might be useful for the Planning Commissioners as well as other interested parties.

The ZA noted a number of currently or soon-to-be vacant industrial properties in the existing Industrial District: VT Precision Woodworks, Manosh sawmill, and the former Decart and MSI facilities on Harrel Street.

Dana Wildes, speaking as a Village Trustee, said he would like to see parcels owned by the Village or Morrisville Water & Light (MWL) Dept, including a 16-acre parcel in the BOP, generate revenue for the benefit of Village ratepayers.

Steve Bousquet said Lamoille Valley Chamber of Commerce (LVCC) supports the concept. He added that any new business development needs to take workforce development into account; it's no use finding new businesses to come here if there aren't trained workers ready for the kind of 21st century light industry most would agree we need. He also said the Business Office Park name should be changed to more accurately describe the uses and function envisioned for the area.

Marc Cote, who owns land adjoining the BOP that is currently in commercial use as a pre-existing non-conforming use, expressed concern about public funds being used that benefit private property owners. He said this could put other commercial property owners at a disadvantage in developing their land.

Jim Pease said any development within the BOP should include municipal water & sewer service.

Ron Stancliff asked if expansion of the existing Industrial district to the west might be an option. Bill said the Cadys Falls Water Co-op's source protection area overlays much of that area, making any significant development problematic.

Jim Mahoney, speaking for the Bishop Marshall School, which owns a sizable portion of the current BOP land, said the school is interested in developing some of its property to generate revenue for the benefit of the school. The school is intrigued by Dave Yacavone's proposal, which it is only now hearing about, but would have some concern about competing for potential business tenants with adjacent properties which might be somehow subsidized by the Town. Regarding uses within the BOP, the school

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seeks maximum flexibility in developing and renting commercial space. It believes retail uses, without size limits or other restrictions, should be allowed within the district.

Bill said he remained concerned about unrestricted retail use within the BOP, citing potential negative impact on existing retail centers within the Village downtown and the north end shopping areas. He said he believes the reason the BOP has not been developed as envisioned ten years ago is not because of zoning restrictions but rather due to the lack of necessary infrastructure. He is encouraged that Dave Yacavone's idea may finally move toward addressing that shortcoming.

Dana Wildes asked what the various municipal bodies (Select Board, Trustees, Planning Commission) that had a role and interest in community development could do to aid BOP property owners in developing their property, provide infrastructure? change zoning? Offer tax incentives? BOP property owners in attendance all agreed infrastructure was the most pressing need.

Ron Stancliff suggested that as part of any joint development effort, all BOP property owners agree on a right of way across the district to connect Route 100 (and the proposed bypass) on the south end with Bridge Street on the north.

Ken Harvey, who owns the BOP parcel along Bridge Street, said he would be willing to grant an easement or right of way across his property to provide access to the BOP from Bridge Street. He's willing to work with other BOP property owners and other interested parties to see the area developed for commercial use.

Marc Cote would like to see the BOP boundary extended to the west to include his and other properties on the lower end of Cadys Falls Road. He noted that there is already a mix of non-residential uses along this portion of the road, which has good access to Route 100.

Leon Whitcomb reiterated his long-standing request that his property, located just south of Morristown Corners Road along Route 100, be included in some zoning district that would allow it to be used for offices or other commercial use. He would like it included in any expanded BOP district.

Bob Beeman noted that the area to the south and east of the current BOP boundary has good highway access on Route 100 and is suitable for commercial uses. He urged the PC to include parcels along Route 100, including the one that currently has his real estate office (a permitted home occupation), from the Village boundary (just south of PJ's Mobil station & convenience store) to the intersection with Morristown Corners Road in an expanded BOP district.

Bill reviewed proposed revisions to the BOP zoning bylaws prepared by Chip Sawyer and just tonight presented to the board for consideration. The proposed revisions (copy attached) offered several alternatives and considerations. Bill said the PC would need time to review and consider the draft revisions and asked that the bylaw review schedule be revised to provide more time for this and other zoning district reviews. He asked that Chip look at similar developments around the state that have been successful for examples of zoning uses and restrictions that might fit our situation. Bill asked the ZA to check on the status of efforts to enlist the Smart Growth Collaborative's participation in the zoning revision process.

Craig Myotte of MW&L gave an update on the Department's plans for sewer treatment plant expansion. He said discussion about what areas outside the Village might be served by sewer line extensions, the proposed Town Sewer Service Area (TSSA), were continuing with the Planning Commission, Village Trustees, and Town Select Board in order to address concerns and conditions imposed by the District 5 Environmental Commission in granting a Land Use (Act 250) permit for the plant expansion.

The ZA informed the PC that the Select Board had the evening prior approved the new fiscal year's contract with Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) for planning services. The contract is for services not to exceed \$21,600 for the year. He noted that the new contract was not funded until July 1st, until which LCPC's services would be curtailed due to lack of current year funds.

The ZA reminded all present that there will be a kickoff meeting of the consultant looking at Downtown Traffic Options on Wednesday, June 11, at 6 PM in the Tegu community meeting room.

Minutes of the May 20, 2008 meeting were accepted on a motion by Max Paine, seconded by Steve Berson. On a motion by Andrew Volansky, seconded by John Meyer, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50.

Respectfully submitted:
Mark Leonard

Minutes approved on: 6/17/08